

Pacific Yearly Meeting Western Friend Editor / Executive Director Report to Annual Session 2020

SUMMARY

Western Friend continues to play a vital role in strengthening connections among Friends throughout the West. The sudden prevention of Friends' traditional in-person worship and fellowship, due to stay-at-home orders in the time of COVID-19, underscores the importance of keeping at-the-ready a media-production infrastructure that can respond to the demands of the day. Like many challenging times that Friends have faced over the decades as "Publishers of Truth," Friends in the current moment are able to rely upon investments made by Friends who came before them. In this case, *Western Friend* is able to rely on contributions made since 1929 in the media-production resources that are now the magazine, book publisher, website, eNewsletter, and videoconferencing platform of *Western Friend*.

REPORT

FY 2019 Financials

Western Friends continues to remain financially stable. A summary of our FY2019 financial report is attached as an appendix. The *Western Friend* board is formalizing a reserves policy that *Western Friend* has already followed successfully for the past several years – that is, our goal is to maintain six-months-worth of operating expenses in a Board-Restricted Reserve Fund (held by Friends Fiduciary) and to maintain a "buffer" Fund Balance in our credit union account that is equivalent to four-months-worth of operating expenses. At the same time, the board has set itself the goal of raising the editor's salary incrementally over the next few years until it is "competitive." By that, the board means to aim toward a salary goal that is based on data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for the job category of "editor," and more specifically, to aim toward an average of the median salaries in the top seven Western metropolitan areas served by the three yearly meetings that support *Western Friend*. The board is developing new fund-raising strategies to support that plan.

Magazine

Western Friend (westernfriend.org/magazine) continues to produce and distribute a magazine six times a year, which reflects the deep conversations and reflections of Friends in the West about topics that concern us today. From July 2019 through June 2020, we published 74 articles, commentaries, poems, and reviews in our print publication – as well as dozens of letters in our "Community Forum" and 36 new additions to our Online Library (westernfriend.org/library). During the year ahead, Friends are invited to contribute works concerning any of the following themes: Teachers, Rules, Vision, Relevance, Tricks, Debt, Tribes, and Science.

The vast majority of subscriptions to *Western Friend* are obtained through "group subscriptions," organized within individual Monthly Meetings. Merely five subscribers are enough to count as a "group," which provides a huge assist to *Western Friend's* operations, and earns for the group's members a small discount on the prices of their magazines. Please, if you can help organize a "group subscription" in your own Meeting, please contact: editor@westernfriend.org.

Books

Western Friend continues to fulfill orders for the books that we publish, most notably the three books of *Faith and Practice* written by "our three" yearly meetings – Intermountain, North Pacific, and Pacific. We provide bulk discounts to Quaker Meetings. Go to our website to learn more (westernfriend.org/books).

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Website

Western Friend's website serves as an information hub for all our activities (westernfriend.org). In addition to the website's role in our magazine and book distribution (discussed above), the website also supports a range of other online services that we offer to the *Western Friend* community.

Extra Extra Western Friend

Produced weekly during the stay-at-home period of the COVID-19 pandemic, this "occasional" eNewsletter has become especially appreciated by our readers, who are seeking the insights of other Friends as they try to discern "the Quaker Way" through turbulent times. We were fortunate to have had this light-weight publication already in place when the pandemic hit, allowing Friends to communicate with each other more quickly than is possible through *Western Friend's* print magazine. Past issues of *Extra Extra* are available on our website, and it's free to sign up to receive it (westernfriend.org/extra-extra-western-friend).

Online Worship

Similarly, we were fortunate to have had a dedicated web page already in place when the pandemic hit, on which we have been listing online worship options for several years. This listing has expanded greatly since March 2020! Consider adding your Meeting's online worship to this listing, if you haven't already. (westernfriend.org/quaker-worship-and-fellowship-online)

Community Directory

As best as we can, we maintain a "current" listing of key contact information for "every" Monthly Meeting and Worship Group affiliated with IMYM, NPYM, and PacYM. Let us know if you see anything in this list that needs correcting: (<https://westernfriend.org/community>).

Memorial Minutes

After each summer's set of annual sessions, we collect all the memorial minutes that Monthly Meetings have shared with their Yearly Meetings that summer, and we publish all those memorials on our website (<https://westernfriend.org/memorials>). These minutes are searchable by name, date of death, and Meeting. All Monthly Meetings in IMYM, NPYM, and PacYM are invited to submit memorial minutes directly to *Western Friend* for online publication.

Governance

The Board of Directors of *Western Friend* consists of three members appointed by each of three Yearly Meetings, resulting in a board of nine members. As of June 2020, those members are:

Sakre Edson, Eugene Meeting, NPYM (Assistant Clerk)
Claire Gorfinkel, Orange Grove Meeting, PacYM
Mary Hansen, Bellingham Meeting, NPYM
Fred Koster, Albuquerque Meeting, IMYM (Treasurer)
Nancy Marshall, Phoenix Meeting, IMYM
Charlene Weir, Salt Lake City Meeting, IMYM
Nancy Wilkinson, Strawberry Creek Meeting, PacYM (Recording Clerk)
Open seat (NPYM)
Jim Anderson, Chico Meeting, PacYM (Clerk)

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Appendix to *Western Friend's* Report to Pacific Yearly Meeting Annual Session 2020

Western Friend Summary Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2019 (10/1/2018–9/30/2019)

Western Friend - FY2019 Financial Statement	
Balance Sheet	
Equity - Operations	\$47,320
Equity - Reserves (Friends Fiduciary)	\$58,493
Liabilities (assets set aside for)	\$8,921
Net Assets	<u>\$114,734</u>
Profit and Loss Statement	
Income	
Subscriptions	\$34,059
Advertising	\$8,212
Contributions from individuals	\$21,839
Contributions from monthly meetings	\$6,495
Yearly meeting support	\$29,000
Book sales	\$5,544
Total Income	<u>\$105,149</u>
Expenses	
Salary and benefits	\$53,968
Travel and registrations	\$8,237
Office rent & expenses	\$9,772
Contracted services for admin.	\$5,641
Contracted services for web	\$6,623
Publication expenses	\$17,400
Board expenses	\$1,000
Total expenses	<u>\$102,641</u>
Net Ordinary income	<u>\$2,508</u>
Unrealized gain (loss)	(\$164)
Net income	<u>\$2,344</u>

